6: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953)1956
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591 tems, despite combining matrilocality and patrilineality. Contemporary in-
174 formants claim matrilocality to be the normal rule since ancient times, but historical data suggestive of antecedent patrilocality among the Mundurucú comes from the German explorers Spix and Martius, who encountered ele-
[114] ments of the tribe near the lower Madeira River in 1819. The reader should be warned that these observers are not completely reliable, and several obvious errors were encountered in their works. We can only verify their information by comparing it with what is reliably known of the structure of Mundurucú society.

604 According to Martius (1867:393), the Mundurucú were apparently patri-
174 local, for a man could eject his wife from the household. Every young man,
591 however, had to go through a period of bride service lasting several years (ibid:393). The same writer claimed that when there was no other potential husband available for a young woman, the mother's brother could marry her (ibid:393). This is of some significance, not only because it gives historical confirmation for the previous analysis from kinship terminology (and Martius was not aware of the "sociological" interpretation of kin terms), but also be-
[171] cause it tends to bolster the hypothesis of antecedent patrilocality. The practice of avuncular marriage is quite widespread in the Amazon basin and in northeastern South America and the Islands (Lowie 1949:317). In all cases, it is correlated with a period of bride service followed by permanent patrilocality. Both Kirchoff (1932:58) and Metraux (1948:111–12) state that avuncular marriage serves to liberate men from the period of temporary matrilocal residence. Whether or not avuncular marriage had this function among the Mundurucú is not known, but its wide distribution in the Tropical Forest region in combination with initial bride service and patrilocality argues for its former existence among the Mundurucú where, according to Martius, the same pattern was in existence.

604 The reader will remember that contemporary Mundurucú informants
121 specificaliy and vehemently deny the contemporary or past practice of avuncu-
591 lar marriage, and this form of marriage was not reflected in genealogies. This is understandable in the matrilocal framework because, although the mother's brother was a member of the opposite moiety to that of his sister's daughter, he was nonetheless a member of the same household until his marriage. In a patrilocal society, the sister's daughter would not reside in the same household and might not even be a resident of her uncle's village. The disappearance of avuncular marriage due to a change from patrilocality to matrilocality would be consistent with much anthropological theorization on the origins of incest prohibitions, whether explained as a result of the necessity to deny sexual access to one's familial intimates, which would disrupt the household (Malinowski 1930:030), or as a result of the need to marry out of the ingroup in order to extend its ties with the larger society (White 1948:425). Titiev (1943:516) has noted the importance of residence in the definition of incest in other cultures:

> "... there are numerous cases in which exogamy is enforced among co-residents even when there is no demonstrable or putative genealogical connection."

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KINSHIP AND MARRIAGE

582 604 Mundurucú kinship terminology indicates the custom of marriage between a man and his sister's daughter.[19] This avuncular form of union was frequently reported by early chroniclers in South America,[20] and is said by Oberg to exist among the contemporary Kamayurá of the upper Xingú River.[21] Martius specifically reported it to be practiced by the Mundurucú when the sister's daughter had no other prospective husband.[22] Avuncular marriage is nowhere in evidence among the contemporary Mun- [835] durucú, however, and its practice, past or present, is vigorously denied. Informants regarded such a union as incestuous, despite the obvious fact that a sister's daughter is always of the opposite moiety from that of her uncle.

174 582 604 171 Since there is no reason to doubt the mutually corroborating distributional, documentary, and kinship-terminological evidence for sister's daughter marriage, we must assume that it has not only disappeared but has lapsed under such circumstances as to be absolutely proscribed. James Watson has noted a similar disappearance and taboo of sister's daughter marriage among the Cayuá Indians of southern Mato Grosso.[23] Although his evidence for its former practice is rather tenuous, he assumes it to have existed and to have fallen into abeyance due to the breakdown of the patrilineal extended family organization, and the union's consequent loss of function as a means of cementing relations between such units. Also, he assumes that marriages with the sister's daughter were commonly second unions, and the contemporary absence of polygyny would militate against the practice. Such rea-

[19] *See* pp. 93–94.

[20] Kirchoff (1932) presents the most complete discussion of this practice and contends that it was a common means of avoiding bride service.

[21] Oberg, 1953, p. 44.

[22] Martius, 1867, p. 393.

[23] Watson, 1952, pp. 118–121.

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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soning may well be extended to the Mundurucú custom of avuncular marriage, or to various types of preferential union in many societies undergoing such changes. On the subject of its taboo, however, Watson deduces that the sister's daughter marriage has fallen under a general Cayuá prohibition on marriages with close kin. This has obviously no relevance to the Mundurucú situation, for no such prohibition exists among them, as the occasional cross-cousin union indicates.

I would prefer to advance an alternate explanation for the taboo, based on the proposition that there is often an incest taboo beween co-residents, whatever their genealogical connection may be.[24] Given the shift in residence rules that has been noted, the mother's brother and his sister's daughter are co-residents, at least until the time of his marriage. Thus, a union with her would be endogamous to the household and would not only be disruptive of the good order of the residential unit, following Malinowski,[25] but would tend to isolate the household from the larger society, a point that Leslie White, among others, has stressed.[26] That sister's daughter marriage is congruent with a patrilocal residence rule would also, it might be added, lend confirmation to the thesis that the Mundurucú are patrilocal.

KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY

Kinship is still an all-pervasive means of ordering social relations among the savannah Mundurucú. Every person in the entire tribe is considered to be related to every other and is known to him and addressed by him by a kin term. Reference to the list below of kin terms used by males indicates how these relations are structured.

[24] *Cf.* Titiev, 1943, p. 516.
[25] Malinowski, 1930, p. 630.
[26] White, 1948, p. 25.